Breast Cancer Action Launches Online Survey of Aromatase Inhibitor Side Effects

Today Breast Cancer Action (BCA) launched an online survey to collect information about side effects experienced by women taking aromatase inhibitors (AIs) to reduce the risk of a breast cancer recurrence. The survey is available online at www.bcaction.org/AIsurvey.

Aromatase inhibitors—Arimidex, Aromasin and Femara—are quickly becoming the most commonly prescribed breast cancer drugs for postmenopausal women following breast cancer treatment. Arimidex was approved for early stage breast cancer in 2002. In 2004, the FDA approved Femara for adjuvant use following completion of treatment with tamoxifen. Because these drugs are so new, very little is known about the long and short-term side effects.

“Women ask us for information about side effects of aromatase inhibitors but the fast approval of drugs by the FDA makes it impossible to provide it,” said Barbara Brenner, Executive Director of Breast Cancer Action. “People are entitled to know the effects of the drugs they’re taking. We’re asking for help from the true experts—the women who take these drugs every day.”

The online survey, which takes less than five minutes to complete, is a thorough investigation of side effects women may be experiencing. The survey is anonymous and confidential to protect patient privacy.

Breast Cancer Action will compile and distribute the survey results within one year. The information will also be provided to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and cancer institutions.

“For the women who currently take aromatase inhibitors, and for those who will in the future, this information about side effects is essential,” Brenner said.

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